

The Icelandic Canadian

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EDITORIAL

Culture is synonymous with enlightenment. In its academic sense the word connotes the training, improvement, and refinement of mind, morals, or taste. It follows therefore that the merits of any national culture are not difficult to estimate. They reveal themselves in the life of the people; in their ethical concepts and habits of living. Without works, culture, like faith, is dead. This is something not always understood by the earnest defenders of antiquity.

It is a matter of pride to possess a body of venerable letters, and pleasant to glorify monuments in stone, but these are not the real treasures of a nation nor the true measure of a people's progress. The true wealth of a nation is its people; its riches no greater than the common denominator of its social consciousness. In other words the attainment of gracious living and the conquest of fear are the ultimate test of any culture.

This is the test of our times, as indeed of all times, but for us of Norse ancestry the challenge has a familiar ring. It is in our blood to be up and doing, meeting fate without fear, and molding the future with passionate sincerity. This sincerity of the Norse nature reveals itself most significantly even in our earliest myths. A childlike sincerity, if you will, but an earnest, honest groping into the mysteries of nature and of man. This integrity of purpose and moral content which underlies all the robust imagery of Norse mythology, prompted Carlyle to write of it: "Superior sincerity (far superior) consoles us for the total want

of old Grecian grace. Sincerity, I think, is better than grace."

It is better than grace in one particular at least, because sincerity in any pursuit has a way of leading man forward in his quest of truth. That is the pertinent thing to remember. Out of their honest quest of truth and lasting verities the old Norsemen evolved a code of ethics which to this day is the bedrock of Scandinavian nature. Honour, courage, valour, this was the trinity of the Norse faith, and the highly civilized codes of the Norse Republic are a stirring witness to the earnest efforts of our ancestors to establish justice and well-being in the nation.

All this is infinitely more important than mere poetic beauty. And yet, whether Carlyle found it so or not, the myths of the Norsemen do have their own peculiar grace. An earnest grace and a profound spiritual significance, which the modern reader will more readily appreciate than did the conservative dilettante of the 19th century.

Be that as it may. One thing I shall permit myself to assert with little fear of refutation. Out of the great mass of mythologies, classical and non-classical, few tales stand in grander perspective than the beautiful story of Yggdrasil, The Tree of The Generations. In this conception of the Norseman's tree of life we have not only a gem of purest literature, but a tale whose depths of imagination is everywhere colored with profoundest race wisdom. It is this wisdom (as applicable today to the problems of human

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relationships, as ever it was) which brought the legend to mind and makes me feel that even a brief sketch of its intrinsic values has a timely and inspiring message.

Yggdrasil, the sacred ash tree, sometimes called the Earth-Bearer, stood in the midst of space when the world emerged from chaos. Its branches reached high above Asgard, the dwelling place of the gods, as man's inspirations rise higher than dogmas and deities. Its tree roots were fixed in space; the first deep-sunk under the home of Darkness and Death. Under this root lay coiled the Serpent of Evil; a universal symbol of matter and physical nature. And this serpent gnawed incessantly the great support of the spreading tree, representing with remarkable insight the daily destruction of all physical phenomena, and also the continual conflict between man's higher nature and the lower instincts which chain him to the earth and the worship of old forms.

The Serpent was encouraged in this destruction by the Squirrel of Mischief, a seemingly harmless creature which raced up and down the trunk spreading dissension between the Eagle which inhabited the top-most branches and the Serpent below. Now this squirrel symbolizes the five physical senses; and these senses, as any psychologist would tell us, always tend to pervert the flashes of spiritual insight which come to man from the high source of the spirit (the aloof and lofty Eagle), and to an almost equal degree they over-emphasize the impulses of the Serpent, or physical nature.

Midway between these two states lay Midgard, home of man (i.e. the body) and because of the mischievous Sense Reports of the Squirrel man found it increasingly difficult to distinguish between Good and Evil.

The second root of the tree reached into Unknown Space where the well of knowledge shone, a star in a dark

sky. And who shall say the Norsemen erred in this? For what is our small store of knowledge but a bright beckoning star in the black overhanging sky of human ignorance? The third root ascended on high to shelter the Sacred Well of Time where the Three Fates had their being. Urd, the Past; Verandi, the Present; and Skuld, the Future, wove the web of Destiny and watered the Tree of Life with the white waters of the Well of Time.

There is more in this lovely legend than at first meets the eye, and I cannot imagine a more profitable summer reading than these grand old myths afford. To my thinking the best translations are those of Rasmus B. Anderson, whose interest in Icelandic literature was inspired by our beloved pioneer pastor, the late Dr. Jon Bjarnason.

To those who may think that time spent upon mythologies is spendthrift and a waste, I should like to remind them once again that the legends of a people are the repository of ancient wisdoms and as such command our respect and profound gratitude. Lastly, this race wisdom lives in us still, in our mental processes and unconscious reactions. It behooves us, therefore, to go to the ancient sources with unprejudiced eyes, eager to gather afresh what is of good report, discarding only that which no longer applies to our expanding lives. A full life and a fruitful life, that, after all, is the true reward of culture. This, too, our forefathers knew and voiced with admirable clarity and their characteristic economy of words:

He is happy
Who for himself obtains
Fame and kind words;
Less sure is that
Which a man must have
From another's breast.
—L.G.S.

The Better Understanding

By JUDGE W. J. LINDAL

The past stays with us. It is true we look forward in our immediate environment; we see visions and they are of the future. But still as we gaze upon them, and as the perspective becomes clearer we find that in those very visions there is much of the past. We cannot picture the world to be except as one into which the old was destined to pass, even though in our mental reshaping old forms seem to disappear.

We, Canadians of Icelandic descent, even as we play our part in the Canadian scene and in the larger world scene which our Canadian duties demand of us, feel that the chord is strong which binds us to the island whence we came. And we want to feel that way. So also it is our hope that the people of that island keep a warm spot in their hearts for the descendants of those who left its shores. In that way they add strength to the bond. The outward form of that bond matters little only so long as we know it is there. Indeed it must be of such fabric that it will not hamper but rather aid our destined development, they over there and we here. Though of the spirit the bond need not be weak or ephemeral. That very quality will make it endure and enable both to draw strength from it.

This, as all other intangible ties, can be maintained only if there is a complete understanding. We must understand the people of Iceland and they us. We must understand them as they are today whether they are the same as they were two or three generations ago when our fathers and mothers came to this country and through whom we have in the past mirrored our countrymen of the little island in the north. They may have changed and there are many reasons why they should have changed. So also the people of Iceland must try to understand us—not a few people who dwell here with us but

whose hearts are more often in Iceland than here. We also have changed. They must try to understand us as Canadians with a Canadian outlook, building in Canada, fighting for Canada—in a cause that is at once Canadian and of the world. It matters little how each weighs the changes in the scales of human values. We must accept one another as we are.

For that reason it is most essential that both groups should every once in a while pause and take stock of impressions which each, by its thoughts and actions, is creating in the minds of the other. If a course is being adopted which jars or irritates there is a duty on the part of both to be most generous in their interpretation. Upon calm and mature judgment it will be found that almost always it was a case of misunderstanding rather than purposeful action fraught with potential dangers to a happy relationship. It is not to be expected that either group should modify its course beyond what is compatible with its own national duty and destiny. But within that limited sphere there is no reason why each should not in decisions reached and opinions expressed weigh the probable reactions of the other.

Causes of Irritation

There can be no doubt that some of us Canadians, in our enthusiasm for our own land and particularly in our pride in the magnificent part which Canadians are playing in the present world struggle, at times adopt an attitude which must be disappointing, to say the least, to our cousins in Iceland. Their feelings at such times are much akin to those of parents whose newly wedded son sees only his new home and is unnecessarily forgetful of the one which he left and from which he received so much. If such irritation exists we can but ask that our friends

make a sympathetic approach in their interpretation of our new status and consequent duties.

So also there must be times when a course is adopted in Iceland which is different to what some here think should have been taken. This has happened during the war, particularly since the occupation of the island by United Nations' troops. Many Icelandic Canadians find it difficult to understand the aloofness of the people to the army — an aloofness which to some appears little short of social ostracism. Coupled with that aloofness, they point out, there seems to be a lack of appreciation of the service to all of mankind which the United Nations' soldiers are rendering wherever they may temporarily be located. Ringing cries of alarm reach us from leaders of thought in Iceland as they contemplate the real and probable consequences of the occupation. Some over here feel that these men are unnecessarily disturbed and that in any case the material benefits of today and the freedom of tomorrow must be set off against social evils and threats to language and culture.

Judgments Must Not be Hasty

We of Canada must not make snap judgments. If we are going to interpret truly the reaction of the people of Iceland to the army of occupation (which includes Icelandic Canadians) we must try to place ourselves in their shoes and ask ourselves quite honestly what, in the light of facts and tradition, we would do if we were in their places. It may be that in so doing most of us would reach the conclusion that they were right. Of one thing I am certain. If we do this their attitude becomes, at least, understandable to us — yes, even to the most rabid Canadian among us.

Now let us briefly pass over the scene.

The Tie of Common Blood

First of all we remind ourselves that they are of our kith and kin. We think we know ourselves—the qualities within us which are deep and not easily uprooted. But the people of Iceland are our people. Their blood is our blood. Our fathers and mothers spoke most affectionately of them, extolled their love of freedom, their insistence that each individual had the right to hew out his own destiny. These very qualities they wanted to pass on to us. The hearts of the people in Iceland must be the same. A few decades could not have changed them.

They are people of the free north. Their forefathers — our forefathers — quitted their lands in Norway that they might be free. They founded Althing; they preserved the precious sagas. Later the people of Iceland suffered untold hardships during the middle ages and through that terrible period extending into the nineteenth century when continuous volcanic eruptions threatened to obliterate all life upon the island. Did they lose courage, surrender? No. As if receiving inspiration from the very adversities of nature a new nation blossomed forth. The language was purified; men of letters followed one another in quick succession; a veritable revival of learning. Jon Sigurdson emerged, who in 1874 wrested from Denmark a charter of self-government which led to the present complete independence of Iceland.

The Foreign Soldier Arrives

At no time before had an army landed in Iceland. The soldier was unknown to the people except in history and fiction. Incidents were bound to happen and unfortunately did happen. The army commands who selected the regiments may have used poor judgment. The misdeeds by individual soldiers would be interpreted as the general average. Even though nothing may have happened which has not happened from time immemorial

where soldiers are billeted in large numbers that would not prevent sweeping judgments and generalizations. But to us the United Nations' soldier, no matter who or where, is one who is fighting for us and for all who no less than we want to be free. To that extent at least he is one of us.

Nor must we forget the good and the glamorous side of the soldier. To the young maiden of Iceland it would have its appeal. Friendships would lead to more serious and quite honourable intentions. But a nation of only about one hundred and twenty thousand people can ill afford to lose of their number, even through marriages which might form valuable connecting links with the English speaking world.

The Threat to Language and Culture

Then Iceland has a treasure to preserve—its language, its sagas and its culture. The Norse language of the days of the Scandinavian migrations has been remarkably well preserved in the present Icelandic. It is the only living classic language and through it are preserved the Sagas and Eddas. The hope of the people of Iceland, shared by us, is that the Icelandic language be given an equally honored position in universities as Latin and Greek. The language must not disappear and it must be kept pure.

Here we are in complete agreement with the people of the old land. We, Icelanders of North America, are an outpost of Icelandic, yes Nordic, language and tradition. We know that through inexorable laws of environment and the sheer weight of overwhelming majorities this outpost will largely disappear. Sometimes we feel that our resistance is not as strong as it should be. Still if the Nordic bastion itself were in danger we would to a man offer whatever support we could give. Neither the Greek nor the Latin have such a fortress to guard and preserve them. Ours must not be destroyed; it must not even be weakened.

Then there was the suddenness of it all. Within a period of struggle of less than a century Iceland had acquired its independence. Iceland's history during that period is a saga in itself. And just when the dreams of the poets were coming true and a second Golden Age of Iceland was unfolding the island was suddenly occupied by a foreign army. This army grew rapidly, would probably outnumber the whole island population. It seemed like an avalanche. At one time there was the fear that the people might be buried under constant volcanic eruptions. Now the people feared, not destruction, but a gradual transformation — and not so gradual at that. It was felt that drastic steps had to be taken: marriages to soldiers were forbidden by law; the outrages of the extremists were allowed to go unchecked, even encouraged.

We, who know that by now at least eighty per cent of the marriages of "Western Icelanders" are mixed, understand how rapid assimilation can become. True, their position is different to ours but they are the guardians of something that must be preserved; theirs is a sacred trust. When interpreted in the light of that trust extreme measures become understandable.

The Better Understanding

In this way we of the west, by passing over in our minds the history of our people in Iceland and the responsibility placed upon them and subjecting our reactions to present events to careful examination in the light of that history and that duty, replace a temporary irritation by an abiding understanding. But we ask that the people of Iceland do the same. In fact voices pleading for such an understanding have already reached us from Iceland—not only for a better understanding between them and us but between the people of Iceland and those of America in general. A most timely and moderate article in that direction comes from the pen of Kristin P. Thoroddsen, in "Lesbók", re-

printed in Lögberg, May 24 last. In summarizing her note of warning and plea for a sympathetic approach, she says: Skortur á skilningi getur oft orðið að alvarlegu miskliðarefní (lack of understanding may often become a matter of serious disagreement).

We know that the people of Iceland desire that the bond between us be preserved. As we admit that to preserve it we must seek to understand them, so we also say that another prerequisite is that they understand us as we are, not as they might wish us to be.

We of Canada

What we are can perhaps be best and most succinctly explained by setting out our sense of values and duties, which we have both inherited and acquired in our new homeland.

Here in Canada we find ourselves on the stage where the drama of a world struggle unfolds itself. It is a reality—the sternest reality that man has yet faced. The characters are living men and women, living nations large and small. Through the bitter but yet lofty and purifying part we play in that drama we have learned that the duties of our citizenship demand the voluntary sacrifice of life itself. We did not learn that lesson without a struggle. In fact, it was learned during the last war — the first act in the drama. Some of the pioneers, recently arrived from an island where there had never been a war, never a man in a soldier's uniform; men and women who so freely gave of themselves for us their children, found it difficult to appreciate that the responsibilities of citizenship at times called for the supreme sacrifice. We find it very easy to understand their feelings; in retrospect we do not condemn them, we sympathize with them and the point of view they took.

But that lesson has been learnt. By now, we have learned to accept the voluntary sacrifice of life itself as a part of our duties in the arena in which

we find ourselves. It is not that we do not wish that there need never be a resort to arms to protect basic rights and guard human lives. We try to face realities, face them with fortitude and a calm of mind; we look hopefully to the day when so great a sacrifice need not be made. And as we remind ourselves that in this struggle the destiny of man on earth is being decided for centuries, if indeed not for all time, it is but natural and inevitable that in our assessment of values the sacrifice of our soldiers is paramount.

Hence in our synoptic analysis of ourselves we place service in the war at the top. Indeed, the greatest contribution which the Icelandic people of North America have so far made is their sacrifice for free man anywhere in the world. Next comes the fortitude and the toil of our pioneer fathers and mothers—the sacrifice they made for us. Then we as Canadians owe a duty to our country to give of our best in the building of a nation strong and free. And lastly, though still important, we must make an effort to guard the bond with the people who are of our blood, thus enriching that which we would give to our land by preserving within us that which we have inherited. This is our sense of values and service and no one can understand us who interprets our duties otherwise. Neither language nor heritage can maintain the bonds with the past if that understanding is wanting.

The Abiding Bond

But even an understanding is not enough. The bond will not be maintained merely by our knowledge of the cultural value of the Icelandic heritage. Something more will be needed. We must find something even deeper and more permanent which they and we have in common, they as Icelanders, we as Canadians. Surely that more abiding common bond which will add strength to the other, if indeed not

prevent its total disintegration, is the love of freedom. It is the abiding bond, sanctified by the deeds of our brethren on the island which stretch back far into the historic past and the blood

of our fallen heroes which has consecrated far flung battlefields. That common sacrifice provides more than an understanding. It becomes a shining oriflamme held high by all.

To Our Friends

THIS ISSUE of The Icelandic Canadian completes the first volume. It is noted, with satisfaction, that the magazine has in its pioneering stage entered hundreds of homes on this continent. From the financial point of view this venture has proved a success, inasmuch as funds for subscriptions and advertising have covered the cost of publication, the work of all members of the magazine committee being purely voluntary. A large share of the credit for the success achieved is due to our representatives who have so ably handled the distribution of the magazine. To them we extend thanks for much appreciated assistance.

We focus our eyes on the future and look forward to continued success. The first issue of the second volume will appear in September. In order to complete the mailing list it is necessary that those whose subscriptions expire with this issue forward renewals before September 1st, to the **Circulation Manager, Icelandic Canadian, 869 Garfield St., Winnipeg, Man.** Acknowledgement will be noted on the address label of the following issue.

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The Literature of Iceland

(1000 to 1550)

By TRYGGVI OLESON, M.A.

Icelandic literature can for the purpose of survey be divided into four periods: 1, the Saga period ending about 1300; 2, the Middle Ages or period of religious writing about 1300 to 1500; 3, the Post Reformation period from about 1550 to 1750, during which there is little literature of note; and 4, the Renaissance, about 1750 to date. Of course when the world speaks of Icelandic literature it means that of the first period and not that of the present or other periods. The crowning glory of Iceland is her ancient literature and its renown is so great that to many it is the only literature Iceland possesses. This opinion can be readily understood when we take into consideration the high quality of the writings, according to the usual standards of judging such things. The literature of the second period is almost entirely of a religious nature and this would naturally, in an age other than that in which it was produced, cause it to appeal to a smaller circle of readers. Consequently it is very little known with one or two exceptions. These are the two periods that will be dealt with in this outline.

The literature of the third period consists in the main of devotional writings, sermons and hymns and possesses thus for any but the specialist little appeal. It is puritanical and impregnated with the Puritan, Calvinistic and Lutheran view of man as an utterly base being, capable in himself of no good. The fourth period represents the rebirth of literature and contains a certain amount of excellent work especially in the field of poetry. But to turn to the subject proper.

The nations of Northern Europe began to be drawn into the orbit of the Greco-Romano-Christian tradition and

culture about 800 A.D. This means that at the time of the discovery of Iceland this movement had already commenced. Once under way it went on triumphantly and as early as the year 1000 Iceland officially became Christian. With Christianity and the monasteries writing became the fashion and from that time dates the transcription of the poetry and saga, which heretofore had been orally transmitted.

Iceland continues in the stream of European culture and receives influences from this till the middle of the sixteenth century in spite of certain evident obstacles. But with the Reformation and the complete ascendancy of the royal power which followed in the wake of the Reformation, this connection with European tradition becomes very slight. It is during this period that literature is at its lowest ebb. Then toward the end of the eighteenth century Iceland again comes into the orbit of European culture and literature comes again to be produced.

Early Literature

To turn then to the literature of the first period. The productions are of two types, poetry and prose. The former consists of what is generally known as the skaldic poetry i.e. composed by the court poets, the Eddic poetry or that dealing with mythology and mythological figures, the religious poetry and other minor forms. In the line of prose we have genealogies, the Icelandic sagas, the histories of the kings of Norway, the lives of the bishops, saints, and martyrs and some fictitious stories of adventure and romance.

To deal with the poetry first. The great compositions of the Scandinavian nations during the period are all Icelandic. That is not to say that they

are all written by Icelanders. Some of the authors undoubtedly belonged to the other nations but they have all been recorded, preserved and in the main composed by Icelanders. The great families in Norway in which poetic talents were passed on from generation to generation seem to have almost all removed to Iceland. There have been suggestions to the effect that the poetic genius of the Icelanders is due to inter-mixture with the Irish but although there are certain things which support this view, a good case can be made out for the other side. This, however, is not the place to discuss the matter.

Skaldic Poetry

The skaldic poetry consists largely of poems written to celebrate the life and deeds of the kings of the northern countries. Poets were held in very high esteem by the kings, for in their poems the deeds of the king would live forever. Harold the Fairhaired as well as Harold Hardrada esteemed their court poets above the courtiers. This is probably why the Icelanders turned their talents to the use they did. They desired advancement and honour and this was the best way to obtain it.

The poems themselves are interesting and valuable both because of the historical events they relate and the light they throw on the ancient mythology as well as being examples of intricate and varied verse forms. Some of them are simple, while some are very difficult to understand by reason of the word order and the diction. To understand the latter an intimate knowledge of mythology is required.

To mention all the individual poets is of course out of the question. One of the earliest and greatest was Egill Skallagrimsson, who once saved his life by composing in a single night a poem in honour of a king into whose hands he had fallen and whose enemy he was. But he did not spend his life as court poet. Probably the greatest of these is Sighvatur Thordarson (about

995 to 1045). He, although born in Iceland spent most of his life abroad in Norway, England, Russia, Italy, etc., coming to the court of St. Olaf in 1015. From that time he was held in very high esteem by the king except for a very short period when Olaf thought he had become too intimate with King Canute of England. But such was not the case. Sighvatur was faithful to Olaf as long as the latter lived and it grieved him deeply that he was in Rome when the Saint was slain in 1030. His character was always above reproach and his poetry likewise has very few blemishes.

Eddic Poems

Of the Eddic poems I will mention only two although many deserve mention and are extremely interesting. Such are, for example, those describing mythological personages as the heroes about whom Wagner composed "The Ring of the Nieblungs." The two I shall briefly deal with are the "Völuspá" or "Prophecy of the Sybil" and the "Hávamal" or "Sayings of the High One."

The former has been described by someone as "one of the vastest conceptions of the creation and ultimate destiny of the human race ever conceived by man." Oswald Spengler declares that in it is found the same adamantine will to overcome and break all resistance of the visible as in the Latin hymn "Dies Irae." It describes the origin of the world, the gods, their treachery, the death of Baldur, the punishment and degeneration of humanity, wars, the last great battle between the gods and their enemies the giants, the final consumation of the world in a blaze of fire. Then the seeress sees a new earth arise from the sea where the golden age reigns. As to the age of the poem there is controversy and some have detected Christian influence at work. It is probably written by a pagan sage at the time when Christianity was challenging the old beliefs as a vindication of

these. To fully appreciate it, it must be read in the original.

The "Hávamál" contains in a nutshell the philosophy of the pagan north. What to avoid, what to seek after, is set out. Wisdom is praised and to emphasize its worth a description of the foolish man is painted. Then the social life of man is treated and finally the first part ends on two beautiful verses in which the mortality of all things except the memory of a life well lived is stressed. Truly a poem with which every Icelander should be acquainted. The author is unknown.

Considerable religious poetry is to be found in this period and the necessity for new descriptive words greatly enriched the poetic diction. The greatest poem of this type is the "Sólarljóð". The torments of hell and the pleasures of heaven are recorded. The whole poem is full of melancholy, arising probably from a realization of the tragic significance of life which Christianity so often engenders or from the loneliness which, according to some, characterizes western man, and the midnight gloom which characterizes his thought. Several authors of this type of poetry are known but many of the poems have perished, as for example, those of Kolbein Tumason, who, being a great devotee of the Virgin, wrote many poems in her honour.

The Sagas

We come then to that sphere of literature in which the Icelanders were pre-eminent: the Sagas. They had beyond most others the art of recording history so that it became not merely history but great literature as well. The key to the development of this quality is perhaps to be found in their character which is very inquisitive and ever desirous of information. From this would arise a general knowledge of what was happening both at home and abroad. The Sagas were of course transmitted orally but there is no reason to question their authenticity on

this score. It is proved by such numerous instances.

During the tenth century Iceland was far from being a peaceful spot. Quarrels, law-suits and slayings were almost daily occurrences and provided many interesting stories. It was a matter of family pride to keep alive the memory of the deeds of the family's members. The eleventh century however with the exception of the first quarter was a most peaceful one. Therefore men would delight in repeating the stories. It is also a fact to be noted, that story telling was one of the chief amusements of the time. People met at the "althing" every year and would exchange stories. In the eleventh century men existed who were so familiar with the various histories and traditions that they were known as "learned."

All these things together with the encouragement given to writing by the monasteries gave the world the Icelandic Sagas and the histories of the kings of Norway. The first writings seem to have been genealogies to be followed by the sagas of individuals. These writings rank with the greatest creations of the spirit of man. In very few cases are the names of the authors known. They wrote down the oral tradition, arranging the material at times but so completely effacing themselves that the stories are absolutely impersonal accounts. On the whole they are extremely reliable. A picture is given of the way in which the people of the age spent their lives. There is consequently little of the life and the customs of that time that we do not know. Religion and the method of sacrifice are two things of which we know least.

Snorri Sturluson

The dean of all Icelandic historians is Snorri Sturluson. As his is the most important name in Icelandic letters I will briefly indicate the high points in his life and mention his chief works.

He was born in 1178 and at the age

of three went to live with Jon Loptsson, the greatest chieftain in his day, of whom it was said, that all considered their disputes well settled if he settled them. His home was the seat of the greatest learning and here Snorri imbibed the knowledge which was to bear such great fruits later. His foster father died in 1197. Two years later Snorri married. He had two children by his wife but did not live long with her. He had other children too but none of them were as great as their father or even nearly so.

Snorri now began to take an active part in the affairs of the nation and became one of its richest men. From 1214 to 1217 he was law speaker and must have had great knowledge of the law. In 1218 to 1220 he was abroad, most of the time at the court of Earl Skuli. It was during these years that the Earl and King Hakon of Norway contemplated a punitive expedition to Iceland. This Snorri was able to prevent by persuading them that it would be much better to win the island by gaining the friendship of the chief men. He himself would work for this. Snorri has been blamed for this but he never attempted to carry out his promises and probably made them only to avert the expedition. After his return to Iceland he was lawspeaker again from 1222 to 1231 and during this period did much literary work. In the years after 1230 conditions in Iceland became very turbulent and he had to flee his home for a time. In 1237 he again went abroad to Skuli who was then at enmity with King Hakon. The latter forbade Snorri to return to Iceland in 1239 but he went in spite of this ban. The king accordingly sent Gizur Thorvaldsson a letter instructing him either to cause Snorri to return to Norway or else slay him. Gizur did the latter in 1241, thus making himself guilty of one of the most dastardly acts any Icelander has ever perpetrated.

Snorri's greatest works are the following: In poetry, several poems about

King Hakon and Skuli and the "Háttatal", a series of verses illustrating all the metres and verse forms employed in skaldic poetry. In prose we have the Edda, which is a text book in the art of poetry and contains in prose the Norse mythology, written with incomparable skill. But his greatest work is the "Heimskringla" or "History of the Kings of Norway" from earliest times to 1177. In composing this Snorri has used all the previous chronicles as well as the court poetry, selecting his material judiciously and accepting only what he deemed reliable. Truth was what he strove for. The greatest history in the collection is that of St. Olaf (1015 to 1030).

At description and delineation of character Snorri is without a peer. He delights in describing ancient manners and customs. His purpose stands comparison with the best in any language if it does not surpass all, and as history his work can be put on a shelf with any. In fact it might not be too much to say that the Heimskringla out-distances any rival.

The last great Icelandic saga is the *Islendinga Saga* of Sturla Thordarson (1214 to 1284). In it is recorded the story of the country from the days of Snorri till it passed to the king of Norway, 1264. It is extremely reliable and very readable and gives a clear picture of the tragic last years of the Icelandic republic, the most turbulent period in the history of the country.

Miscellaneous Literature 1000-1300

The stories of the early bishops of Iceland remain to be mentioned. We possess the lives of most of them, written to a large extent by their contemporaries. They are thus very important as documents pertaining to the conditions of the country and especially its religious life during the first three centuries of Christianity. They were in the main written by churchmen and we know the names of many of the authors. Some were written in Latin and translated later into Ice-

landic. In addition to these we have several Lives of the Saints and the Virgin. Many of these are translations from the Latin, and attest the thorough knowledge the Icelanders had gained of this language. The translations are in many cases almost masterpieces. The popularity of this type of literature is evident from many passages in contemporary literature. For example in the *Sturlunga* it is recorded that a certain Thorgils being asked on the night before he was slain, what amusement he desired, stories or dance, on learning that the Life of St. Thomas a Becket was to be held, requested that it be read to him, for he did love him above all the saints.

Stories of knights, the Arthurian legends, the fall of Troy and others, were also to be found. The works of Lucan, Sallust, etc., were known. Grammars of this time are extant, which shows a more or less intimate knowledge of Greek, Hebrew and Old English as well as Latin.

With that closes what I have chosen to designate as the first period of Icelandic literature, the period richest by far in production and quality, a period of great learning and one in which Iceland may really be said to be connected with the European tradition. The clerics possessed an extensive knowledge of the Christian tradition as well as that of their own country and were well versed in Latin, the then universal language. Both laity and clergy travelled over the whole of Europe, attended universities in Germany and France and were thus in close contact with all that passed on the continent. The "Althing" played its part in the dissemination of knowledge. The nation possessed great vitality. There is much internal strife towards the end. The country finally passes under the rule of the king of Norway while the power of the church gradually becomes great.

(Continued in next issue)



EXODUS

By Lt.-Cmdr. Frederick B. Watt, R.C.N.V.R.
Author of "Who Dare to Live"

Ahead the line where sea met coast,
Behind the dust of Pharaoh's host,
And Moses just a chap like us,
Lived out the book of Exodus.

He knew, of course, his God was wrong
In picking him. He wasn't strong.
He told the Lord his constant doubt of it,
But somehow couldn't talk Him out
of it.

So Moses cried again, "Make clear
Exactly where we go from here.
At press time there is even betting
We'll take a licking or a wetting."

The Lord, a patient Person, said—
"The Plan's unchanged. Just move
ahead."

Who thought we'd face as man and
nation

This same mosaic situation?
Ahead—a crimson sea of fears—
Behind the marching of the years.

Who was to guess the Lord would make
The same unreasoning mistake
And hand responsibility
To timid souls like you and me?

So we, in turn cry out, "Make clear
Exactly where we go from here.
Our people tend to make a fuss
Like people did in Exodus."
What does the Lord, still patient, say?
"Ahead! There is no other way."

Blizzard Detour

By VIOLET P. INGALDSON

The light snowmobile skidded so violently as it slid from the snowbank to glare ice, Gunnar Solvason, in the driver's seat had to twirl the steering wheel furiously to keep it from turning turtle. This was his first cross-the-lake drive and he was due at the Tamarack Island fishing camp tonight.

He drove at a steady speed along the ice of Lake Winnipeg and felt happy. At last he had found a job as deputy fish-net inspector, with the option of becoming inspector if his work was satisfactory. And this meant he could send his sister, Lilia, to New York to study singing.

The short winter day was drawing to dusk when the buildings of the fishing camp loomed before him. As Gunn slid to a stop he was received by the furious barking of sled-dogs. Gunn got out stiffly, strode to the large cabin and pushed open the door.

About twenty men seated at the pine table, glanced at him, then without a word of greeting went on eating their supper.

An elderly man came in from the bunk room and stopped short on seeing Gunn. His red hair was streaked with gray, deep lines curved from his large nose to his mouth, his brown eyes glared antagonism. The young man realized that this was Paul Forester, wealthy owner of many fishing camps.

"New inspector?" His voice carried contempt.

"Deputy," Gunn corrected. "I'd like a meal and bunk."

"Pete, set'm a place." Turning on his heel the man ignored Gunn.

Pete, the cook, slouched forward with tin plate and cutlery, slammed it on the end of the table. Shrugging out of his parka, Gunn sat down after having washed at the tin basin in the corner. The men left the table one by one, except a redheaded youth on his right.

His likeness to Paul Forester was unmistakable; this was Ted, the wealthy man's only son.

"No one but a polecat would be a fish-net inspector." Ted placed his elbows on the table, leaned forward and scowled at Gunn. "Makin' a livin' on fishin's hard enough without you fella's seizin' 'the nets."

"An don't forget the ice." A giant of a young man with a mop of black hair and round blue eyes spoke from where he sat by the stove, fitting a handle to an ice chisel.

"Naw Ben," Ted faced Gunn. "This fall after we'd set the nets the ice broke away from the shore and carried them away. The ice floes broke up, we never saw them again. How do you expect us to make a living?"

"By staying within the law." Gunn's blue eyes looked fearlessly at the faces about him. "The law stipulates that no nets under five-and-a-quarter mesh should be used for white fish. Use the right nets and you'll have no trouble."

"No trouble!" Ted jumped up from the bench and paced the floor. "Trouble's the only thing we have plenty of. There's no big fish left in the lake. If we use big mesh the fish push through. So long's there's sale for small fish we'll fish them, an' neither you or anyone else's goin' to stop us."

"Fishermen are fools," Gunn stated emphatically. "They've made small fortunes on fishing. When the lake was getting depleted the Government built costly hatcheries, filled the lake with fry but the fishermen, by using small-mesh nets grab the fish before it is full grown. If that practice is not stopped, there'll be no fish. Can't you men see that?"

"Yeah." Ted spat out the piece of match he'd been chewing. "We're to

take large fish while the other fella scoops up the small ones. When all the small ones are gone, we won't have any."

This sage reasoning was met with hearty laughter from the men, and Gunn saw a look of pride and approval pass from father to son.

"That's it in a nutshell," Gunn moved toward the bunk room. "The fishermen don't use any sense so the Government has to step in, or there won't be any fish in the lake in a few years."

Ted followed him. "Well, we'll have made our pile, we should worry."

Next morning Gunn was rudely awakened by the snarling of dogs. He jumped from his bunk, shrugged into his clothes and strode into the kitchen. The men had breakfasted; were ready to go out to the fishing grounds. They had deliberately gone about so quietly that he hadn't awakened. He'd be late!

"Get my breakfast," he told Pete, as he grabbed his cap and stepped outside.

It was bitterly cold. At lantern light the men were harnessing their shivering dogs. They used the "follow-on" method, each "train" composed of five or six dogs attached to a sled with a large box for hauling back the fish. With cracking of whips, barking of dogs and shouting of men the cavalcade disappeared into the murky darkness.

One look at the snowmobile and Gunn's heart sank. Neither the engine nor canvas-covered frame had been tampered with, but water had been poured over the skis and caterpillar cementing the snowmobile to the lake ice. It would take him a long time to chisel the ice away.

After spinning the crank, he at last made connection and the cold engine coughed and sputtered. He left it running while he went in for breakfast.

With a smirk on his wizened face, Pete placed it before him. "He knows," Gunn thought. "They think I'm a sap, are all laughing up their sleeve. If

I'm to succeed as inspector I must gain their respect and liking—somehow."

Gulping down his breakfast he rushed out again. Using the ice chisel—a sharp steel instrument on a five-foot handle—he began to chop the ice away, being careful not to crack the skis or connections of caterpillars. At last the snowmobile was loose, and with the throttle wide open Gunn went skimming towards the fishing grounds.

The first pair of workers he reached was Ted and Ben. They had the "basin-hole" and other holes hacked open and were hauling the nets from beneath the ice and releasing the slimy, squirming fish. The nets were of regulation size. Gunn went to pair after pair of workers and found all the nets the right size. He was beginning to wonder why the men had been so anxious to make him late, when he noticed Ted and Ben working furiously at opening "basin-holes" some distance away. Waiting until they were hauling out the nets, Gunn jumped into the snowmobile and sped down the ice towards them.

"Haul out these nets," he ordered.

Scowling and muttering threats under their breath the men complied. The nets were only four-and-a-quarter inch mesh; illegal!

After saturating them with gasoline Gunn touched a match to the heap. During the afternoon he found a string of ten more illegal nets.

While going back to camp Gunn scanned the sky uneasily. Dark blue banks of clouds were piled up on the western horizon; a blizzard was in the brewing and often the late winter storms were the worst of the season. The men and he would be kept to the camp; he didn't look forward to it but maybe he could prove to them that he bore no grudge against them, was only doing his duty.

The instant he entered the shack he sensed that something was wrong; his face a grim mask, Pete puttered around

(Continued on page 31)

Sandy Bar

(Translated from the Icelandic of Guttormur J. Guttormsson.)
DR. B. H. OLSON

"Twas late upon a summer's night,
The air was cleft with thunders might,
The rain poured down in steady flight,
A little pool each footprint made.
Slowly I passed through Sylvan shade,
Of clustered aspen trees arranged,
And came upon a lowly ruin
Of pioneers at Sandy Bar.
Ruins of the long dead settlers,
Pioneers of Sandy Bar.

Forgotten are their names to men,
Never to be recalled again.
Their mausoleum is a fen,
'Neath a gloomy Northern sky.
Death's dark angel o'er life's stream
Hovers, aye in every dream.
'Twas as if his mighty pinions,
Shadows cast o'er Sandy Bar.
Shadows of his Eagle feathers
Hovered over Sandy Bar.

Stout hearts are with fear encumbered
When they feel their days are numbered
Here on earth, for they have slumbered.
Theirs is not a finished task,
The soul is unprepared for flight
Thro' Stygian darkness into light;
And a haunting fear possessed them
In their hearts at Sandy Bar.
Nameless unknown dread possessed
them
In their hearts at Sandy Bar.

All their sorrows here I pondered,
As about the spot I wandered.
Found dead trails and sadly wondered,
How in death they met their fate.
When lightning flashes vision gave
I sighted many a lonely grave
Of frontier man and frontier maid
That perished here at Sandy Bar.
Men to whom life gave small comfort
Perished here at Sandy Bar.

Adventurers of yesteryear
Forsook their homeland, settled here.
And gained no laurels, without fear
Gave their all of brain and brawn.
To strive, tho' failure was their lot
For their ideal they vainly fought
With single purpose blazed a way
Starting out from Sandy Bar.
Way to victory, steadfast, certain,
Reaching out from Sandy Bar.

My spirit sank but sought to rise,
The rain from out the leaden skies
Were great tears, shed from cosmic eyes
Wept in anguish from above.
Before the fury of this storm
Were trees uprooted, scattered, torn
As if the elements fulfilled
Blighted hopes of Sandy Bar,
Forced new trails to freedom, honor,
For pioneers at Sandy Bar.

Their forlorn hope and vision clears
Our path, resounding down the years
Make strong our faith, allay our fears,
Point the way that we should go.
Are now fulfilled in goodly measure
By the sturdy men who treasure
Memories of the bygone days, ,
And pioneers of Sandy Bar.
Have kept the trust, redeemed the faith,
Of pioneers of Sandy Bar.

This task begun, we dedicate
To vanquished men of small estate,
The young shoots met a chilly fate;
Circumstance their growth did mar.
Marked were they, but daunted never,
Frost bitten and stunted ever,
The grass frost seared, now seems to
me,
Flourishes at Sandy Bar.
Though chilled, a fragrant breath it
spreads
Enveloping all Sandy Bar.

A glow throughout my being crept,
And flickering lights before me leapt
O'er cairns, that have in muteness kept
Men that nearby entombed are.
The riches buried with them there
Were sinews stout, their manhood fair.
All of them that never more can
Work and strive at Sandy Bar,
That which lives not on forever,
Is interred at Sandy Bar.

The storm abates, the sky fast clears
A star decked canopy appears.
A highway ever widening rears
The wind from the South afar.
Rent in twain the dark clouds scurried,
In confusion Northward hurried,
A starlit azure heaven watched
Over all at Sandy Bar.
Heaven, refuge of the settlers,
Brightly shone o'er Sandy Bar.



The Icelandic Saturday School

For several years the Icelandic National League has sponsored the teaching of Icelandic in Winnipeg. The classes are conducted on Saturday mornings, commencing in October and continuing for 26 weeks each year. A few adults have attended these classes, but there is a growing need for the establishment of evening classes to accommodate those who are anxious to take advantage of the teaching but who cannot come on Saturday mornings.

For the past five years the average attendance has been 50; mainly children between the ages of six and sixteen. There are five teachers, many of whom have given their services for years, because they firmly believe this work has definite cultural value.

At the close of each school term the pupils entertain with a program per-

formed entirely in Icelandic, which is proving more popular every year.

This year the concert was held April 17, in the Federated Church auditorium, with an enthusiastic overflow audience.

It was evident to the audience at once that the painstaking work of teachers and pupils was bearing a rich harvest. Several recitations and two short costume plays gave the pupils an opportunity to display their knowledge. Two Icelandic folk dances were danced and sung in costume, with delightful grace and precision.

The school choir, conducted by Mrs. Holmfriður Danielson, delighted the audience with its artistic performance. Rev. V. J. Eylands, vice-president of the Icelandic National League, and Mrs. E. P. Jonsson, directress of the school, gave short addresses.

The Icelandic Canadian

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Democracy—Live It or Loose It

In Canada there are many patriotic men and women who have formed groups, large and small, for the purpose of rendering some service to our country in its present great undertaking. In this way they find an outlet for an urge which is strong within their breasts. The work they do, being voluntary and from the heart, has that ring of sincerity about it which makes it of inestimable value in maintaining morale on the home front.

One of these organizations is the "Pull Together Canada" press service. It was originated by a group of eight Winnipeg young women. A series of short pithy articles are prepared on different phases of Canada's war effort and distributed to people whom they seek to reach and who, they know, will use them as a basis of encouragement to people in their communities.

We are very happy to be able to announce that one of the original group of girls is Gudrun Eggertson, a member of the Icelandic Canadian Club. As an example of the type of work the "Pull Together Canada" group are doing we reprint the following brief but pointed remarks on democracy:

In the last war we fought to make the world safe for democracy. Victory won, we failed to make democracy safe. Now that we have another war to fight, this is the time to know what democracy really is. To win this war, we must live democracy as well as talk it; and believe it so passionately that it becomes a dynamic fighting faith, capable of inspiring us now and of shaping the future of the world.

Originally one of the foundation-stones was the value and worth of every human being but, with the increasing de-personalization of industry, this idea has been almost lost. Today, for example, absentee-ism in war industries would cease to be a problem if the individual worker had a sense that his particular job is a vital part on which the whole depends, instead of just a cog in the wheel.

If democracy is to live in the world it must live in the heart of the ordinary man, and be part of his daily experience. Self-discipline and giving freely of our best work to the country, will forge ideals into reality and make democracy secure.

Another of democracy's corner-stones is the great idea of freedom. This used to mean the liberty to live a rich life of the mind and spirit. But now our idea of freedom too often is the right to do as we darn well please; in fact rights consistently loom larger than duties. In that spirit liberty soon degenerates into license, and life loses its purpose and meaning. We no longer know what we are free for, and so we lose faith in our way of life and become cynical.

The freedom we need to ensure for ourselves is the freedom to live for all mankind; to contribute to the life of the nation; to give rather than to get.

Lord Tweedsmuir wrote: "Democracy is primarily an attitude of mind, a spiritual testament; not an economic structure nor a political machine." When democracy rediscovers its moral purpose it will conquer the world. It must either conquer or be conquered. There is no middle course. The life of democracy depends upon our determination to make it the great answering philosophy for our day and age.

Merit Rewarded

Following the announced policy of the magazine of publishing information about people who have achieved distinction in some particular field of endeavor, we are glad to include the name of Olafur Olafson of Old Wives, Saskatchewan, who for many years has taken a lead in one of the primary industries of the west, that of stock raising.



OLAFUR OLAFSON.

born in Iceland, was the oldest of a family of five; he was left fatherless at the age of eight. At that tender age he left home and like so many children in Iceland tended sheep—often a cold and cruel and always a lonesome job. Although that job did demand a great deal of responsibility it at the same time afforded an opportunity for deep meditation. It was in work of that type that the young people of Iceland learned to do their own thinking. Young Olafson was no exception to the rule. What he started then stood him in good stead during the years to come. He thought for himself.

Having spent his boyhood years as a shepherd, Olafson, during the adolescent period, turned to fishing. It was there that the old Viking spirit awakened in

him the urge to explore further out into the unknown. He heard of Canada and nothing could have stopped him. On arrival, he as others, was directed to the prairies, and the only employment was farm work at which he hired out at \$5 per month. In 1892 he went to Moose Jaw and began railroading with the C.P.R. He is credited with being the first railway conductor in Canada of Icelandic origin.

As he rode up and down the railroad along Lake Johnson and other islets in the vast expanse of prairie ocean, even the necessary railroad that pushed itself through this seeming unlimited waste could not hold down the young adventurer. "Why become tied down to a damn railroad when there is so much grass calling for cattle and horses?" This was in 1897. The railroad was forsaken, a young rancher settled a short distance south of Moose Jaw.

But it was more than raising cattle and horses to feed on prairie grass. Olafson specialized on raising cattle of the type that would produce beef of the best quality. Very soon ribbons were pinned on him at nearby agricultural shows. He was a member of the first Moose Jaw Turf Club, and one of the original forty members, each of whom bought an acre of land for a turf park, which is now the Moose Jaw Exhibition Grounds.

The horizon widened. Olafur felt the need of an organization of the stock producers of the west. In 1913 he organized the Saskatchewan Stock Growers, and later, largely through his efforts, Live Stock Producers Limited came into existence. He has been a member of the Board of Directors since it was organized in 1927.

Though raising stock has been Mr. Olafson's main occupation, and at many a time his herds have been both in size and quality among the very best in the west, he very soon could see that another primary product of the prairies

was wheat. He has for many years occupied responsible positions in local wheat pool committees and other trading co-operatives which he felt must be given every possible local encouragement.

But stock raising was Olafson's main occupation, and it was in that field where he gave of his best. To be a leader in that very essential industry of the Canadian West is something which many would seek to attain, but which only a few have reached. Olafur Olafson is one of them.

Humility is one of his virtues. He says that while he has led a very busy life, he has never done anything to merit any special recognition. But his neighbors and indeed the people of the province of Saskatchewan think differently. In February, 1940, he was presented with an honor scroll, beautifully illuminated, on behalf of eight provincial organizations in appreciation of work done in Western Canada during his long and useful life as a

leading citizen of the west. In part it reads as follows:

"Your character was moulded by your philosophical turn of mind and unique originality. Your fearless attacking of the ills of the producers; your sincere desire to improve the vicissitudes of agriculture: all these with your never failing humor carried you progressively forward."

To us in our little Icelandic world it is interesting to recall that Mr. Olafson, sometime prior to 1900, donated a cup for competition among two Icelandic hockey clubs. Those two clubs laid the foundation for the Falcon hockey fame of later years.

As was to be expected, the spirit of service is strong in Olafson's children. His two daughters are on active service, Hattie an L.A.W. in the Air Service and Ellen a Wren in the Navy. An only son was seriously injured some time ago.

Moods

Spring, lovely spring! Thou art
In Nature's files
The cheery counterpart
Of human smiles.

Summer, so gaily guised!
Life's chronograph
In thee has symbolized
The merry laugh.

The seasons, one by one,
The moods we feel,
Are but the skeins upon
Life's spinning wheel.

Autumn, so bleak and brown!
On Nature's chart—
As on a face—the frown
Of Time thou art.

Winter! Time's icy shell!
On Life's quick page
Thou art the parallel
Of human rage.

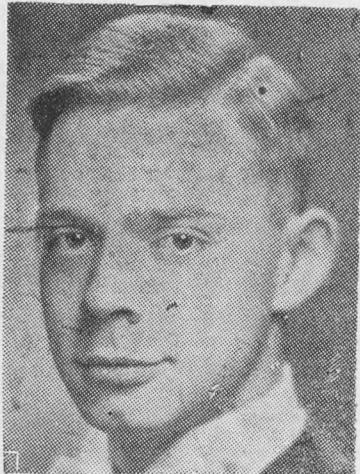
Paul Bjarnason

We invite you to become a member of The Icelandic Canadian Club. Membership fee \$1.00 per year.

Treas.: Elin Eggertson,
919 Palmerston Ave., Winnipeg.

In The Halls of Learning

The Icelandic Canadian intends to keep a record of those of our number who graduate from educational institutes in America. Special mention will be made of undergraduate as well as graduate students who achieve distinction in scholarship in their particular field.



DALLAS H. STEINTHORSON, son of Mr. and Mrs. H. Steinthorson, of 295 Elm St. in Winnipeg, graduated with a gold medal in Economics from Queen's University. That was the culmination of a succession of honors achieved during his undergraduate years. Of him it has been said that he has "blazed a trail through the schools of Winnipeg which few have equalled." As a child he attended the Robert Smith and Queenston schools. Five years ago he graduated from Kelvin High School, being one of eight in the province who received an Isbister scholarship. At the University of Manitoba he won a scholarship each year as well as a special scholarship in German in his second year. In his fourth year he was awarded a Fellowship to Queen's University, from which he graduated with high honors this year.

Dallas is at present taking an officers' course at Three Rivers.

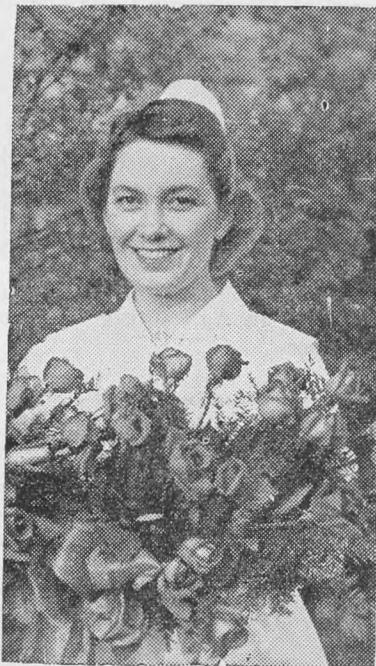


MRS. GORDON JOSIE, (Svanhvít) daughter of Dr. and Mrs. S. J. Johansson of Winnipeg, who formerly held a responsible position in the Department of Labor, has been awarded a scholarship of \$500.00 donated by the Toronto Star for Social Research Work at Toronto University.



MARIA GREEN, Los Angeles attorney, has been appointed to the legal staff

of the War Department in Southern California, and is the first woman to receive such an appointment in that area. She is a graduate of the law school of the University of Southern California, and was formerly chairman of the Women's Junior Committee of the Los Angeles Bar Association. Maria was born in Winnipeg, and since 1922 has lived in Los Angeles. Her mother, Elaine, is a sister of Eggert S. Felsted, jeweller of Winnipeg.



ELLEN SOFFIA JOHNSON, daughter of Björn and Thórhildur Johnson of Glenboro, Man., graduated this year from the Winnipeg General Hospital School of Nursing. She was awarded three scholarships: The Campbell McTavish Memorial Scholarship of \$250 for general proficiency, the W. A. Murphy scholarship of \$250, and the Alumnae Medal and \$25 given by the Alumnae of the Winnipeg General Hospital School of Nursing.

★

Three sisters, the daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Eggert S. Felsted, of Winnipeg, have all distinguished themselves as students of the best type.



CAROL JOY FELSTED graduated from the Arts Institute of Chicago in 1942, receiving two degrees, Bachelor of Fine Arts and Bachelor of Art Education. At present she is continuing her studies at the Institute and the University of Chicago for the degree of Master of Fine Arts. Both at Chicago and in Winnipeg Carol has won prizes in the field of Art, the first one being a painting of Old Fort Garry, which she won when only fifteen years old. This year she was awarded the Snydacher Scholarship at the Chicago Institute.

BEATRICE FELSTED, who graduated in Home Economics from Manitoba University in 1937, is at present with the National Research Council in Ottawa. In her spare time she lectures for the Adult Education Association on war nutrition and similar subjects.



ELAINE FELSTED, at present an undergraduate in Manitoba University, has been chosen Lady Stick in the faculty of Home Economics for next year.

★

Two students at the University of Saskatchewan have distinguished themselves. JONAS KRISTJANSSON won a Medal in Field Husbandry. WILLIS M. JOHNSON was elected President of the Students' Representative Council, the highest honor in the gift of the students of the University.

BIRGIR HALLDORSON, who has been studying music in New York, has been awarded the annual bursary donated by the Government of Iceland to distinguished students in America of Icelandic descent.

UNIVERSITY AWARDS

Delta Phi Epsilon bursary, \$50.00, Olga Helen Anderson.

Osborne bursary in interior decorating, \$50.00, Raquell L. Austman.

Second year Isbister scholarship, \$60.00, Harold A. C. Johnson.

Managra scholarship in English, \$20.00, William Lawrence Palson.

GRADUATES Manitoba University

Certificate in Agriculture — William Lawrence Palson.

Bachelor of Arts — Bernice Rae Bjarnason, Audrey Fridfinnson, Ina Margaret Sommerville.

Bachelor of Science — Francis Gisli Scott, Eva Margarete Buhr, August Sigurdur Johnson, Einar Sigurjon Jonasson, Skafti Joseph Borgford.

Electrical Engineering — Baldur Guttormson, Bjorn Edward Carlstrom, Carl Darwin Anderson.

Saskatchewan University

Bachelor of Arts — Robert Erlendur Helgason.

Bachelor of Science — Eldon Arthur Johnson, Margaret Frances Cook, Margaret Aileen Craddock.

Certificate in Agriculture — Jonas Kristjansson.

Graduate Nurses

Winnipeg General Hospital — Agnes Bardal, Gladys Steinunn Gillies, Ellen Soffia Kristjansson, Louise Jona Sigurdson, Jonina Ester Stefansson, Ellen S. Johnson.

Misericordia Hospital — Helga Johnson, Maria Jonasson, Alma Louise Baldwin.

★

At the Silver Jubilee of the Manitoba Musical Festival the following students received the highest marks in their respective groups:

BARBARA LESLIE GOODMAN, piano solo, "The Beethoven Sonata;" ALLAN BECK, violin solo; GLORIA SIVERTSON, pianoforte duet; MARGARET HELGASON was one mark below the winner of one of the song groups.

The magazine recognizes that it may have missed many names of students and graduates who should have been included. A favor will be conferred if their names are forwarded.



Capt. H. Freeman Skaptason

Our War Effort



Capt. H. FREEMAN SKAPTAISON

Born in Winnipeg, Oct. 8, 1911. Joined the Winnipeg Light Infantry as 2nd Lieut., in October, 1940. Transferred to the Royal Canadian Corps of Signals and took his first training at Gordon Head, B.C. Later appointed Assistant Chief Instructor at Kingston, Ont. While there he organized and became editor of "The Signalman," a magazine published by the unit. Embarked for overseas in March, 1943. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Halldor B. Skaptason, of Winnipeg, Man. His wife, formerly Helga Reykdal, resides in Winnipeg, Man.



Sqd.-Ldr. NORMAN RICHARD JOHNSTONE

Born in Winnipeg, April 6, 1911, son of Mr. Thomas A. Johnstone and the late Mrs. Lilly Johnstone, of Winnipeg. Enlisted for active service in fall of 1939. Went overseas with the 110th Squadron, in February, 1940, as Flying Officer. Transferred to No. 1 Fighter Squadron and has made 80 "fighter sweeps" over France and Germany. He is now back to Canada to take charge of operations on the east coast. He graduated from the University of Manitoba in Electrical Engineering in 1933.



Sqd.-Ldr. Louis Stadfeld



Sqd.-Ldr. N. R. Johnstone



Sqd.-Ldr. LOUIS STADFELD

Son of Mr. V. G. Stadfeld and the late Mrs. Stadfeld, pioneer settlers of the Riverton, Man., district. Squadron-Leader L. Stadfeld has been with the permanent Royal Canadian Air Force for the past fourteen years, and is now stationed in Western Canada. His wife and two daughters reside in Vancouver, B.C.



**SONS OF MR. WALTER WALTERSON AND THE LATE
MRS. ELIZABETH WALTERSON, OF SELKIRK, MAN.**



Cpl. Walter S. Walterson



Leading Stoker H. John Walterson



Petty Officer Mindy J. Walterson



First Class Stoker Einar Walterson

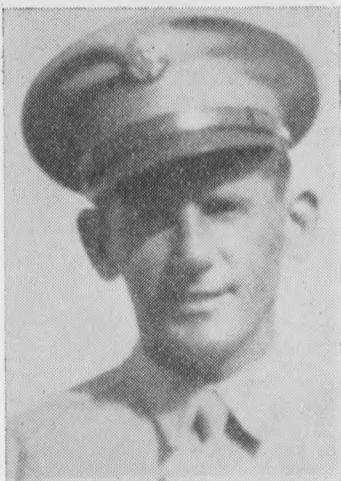
CPL. WALTER S. WALTERSON—Born at Selkirk, Aug. 19, 1898. Enlisted as aero-engine mechanic with the R.C.A.F., Aug. 14, 1940. Took his technical training at St. Thomas, Ont. Afterwards stationed at Calgary, Alta., for over two years. Is now at Souris, Man. His wife and family reside at Selkirk, Man.

LEADING STOKER H. JOHN WALTERSON—Born at Selkirk, Dec. 11, 1906. Enlisted with R.C.N.V.R., Oct. 25, 1942. Serving out of Halifax, N.S. His wife resides at Selkirk, Man.

PETTY OFFICER MINDY J. WALTERSON—Born at Selkirk, July 29, 1912. Enlisted as first class stoker, June, 1940. Served overseas from November, 1940, until July the following year. Has served on a number of Canadian ships, among them being the ill fated "Ottawa," of which he was a survivor. Is now serving out of Halifax, N.S. His wife and family reside at Halifax.

STOKER FIRST CLASS EINAR WALTERSON—Enlisted July 21, 1942, with the R.C.N.V.R. Now stationed at Esquimalt, B.C. Born at Selkirk, Aug. 17, 1913. His wife and daughter reside at Selkirk.

Four From One Family In U. S. Army



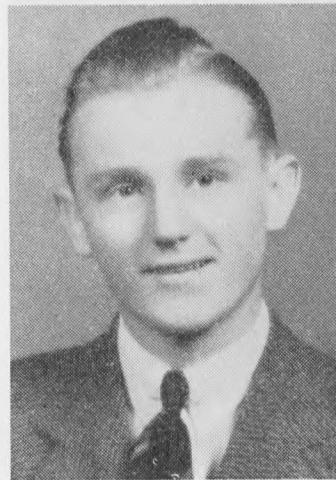
Sgt. Steinthor Hermann



Sgt. Barney Mathias Hermann



Seaman Hjalmer William Hermann



T/5 Theodore Marino Hermann

SONS OF MR. AND MRS. PJETUR HERMANN, FORMERLY OF MOUNTAIN, N.D., NOW RESIDING IN SEATTLE, WASH., U.S.A.

SGT. S. HERMANN—Born at Vidir, Man., Nov. 2, 1911. Inducted into the U.S. Army, March 16, 1942. Stationed at Lowry Field, Colo., U.S.A.

SGT. B. M. HERMANN—Born at Mountain, N.D., U.S.A., on Jan. 25, 1915. Inducted into the U.S. Army, Oct. 21, 1941. Now stationed at Camp Lipon, Tenn., U.S.A.

SEAMAN FIRST CLASS H. W. HERMANN—Born at Mountain, N.D., U.S.A., Oct. 24, 1919. Enlisted May, 1942. Embarked for service in Iceland, September, 1942, where he now serves.

T/5 T. M. HERMANN—Born at Mountain, N.D., Sept. 16, 1922. Inducted into U.S. Army, Dec. 5, 1942. Now stationed at Fort Knox, Ky., U.S.A.

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Sgt. Magnus Oscar Einarson



Gunner Halldor Einar Einarson



Bombardier Carl Waldimar Einarson



Cpl. Leifur Jon Einarson

SONS OF MR. AND MRS. SNÆBJORN EINARSON, FORMERLY OF LUNDAR, MAN., NOW RESIDING IN WINNIPEG, MAN.

SGT. M. O. EINARSON—Born at Lundar, Man. Oct. 5, 1910. Enlisted in the Royal Canadian Ordnance Corps, July 31, 1941. Now serving with the C.A.(B.)T.C., Fort William, Ont.

GUNNER H. E. EINARSON—Born at Lundar, Man., Aug. 22, 1913. Enlisted Feb. 16, 1943, in the Royal Canadian Artillery, and is in training at Fort Garry, Man.

BOMBARDIER C. W. EINARSON—Born at Lundar, Man., Sept. 25, 1918. Enlisted June 3, 1940, No. 2 Canadian Artillery Reinforcement Unit. Embarked for overseas service Dec. 2, 1940, and is now serving in England.

CPL. L. J. EINARSON—Born at Lundar, Man., Dec. 4, 1920. Enlisted R.C.A.M.C., Ninth Field Dressing Station. Embarked for overseas July 14, 1940, and is now stationed in England.

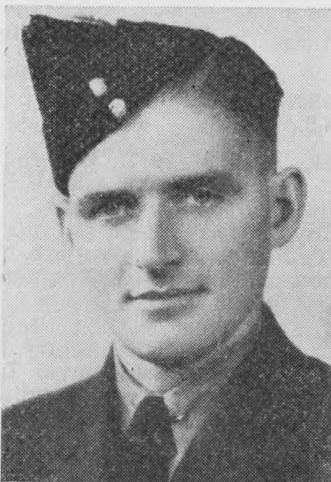
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Corp. Kenneth Johnson



Sigm. G. E. Johnson



A.C.1 Skuli Johnson



A.C.2 Arthur Johnson

SONS OF MR. AND MRS. ARNI JOHNSON,
OF ASHERN, MAN.

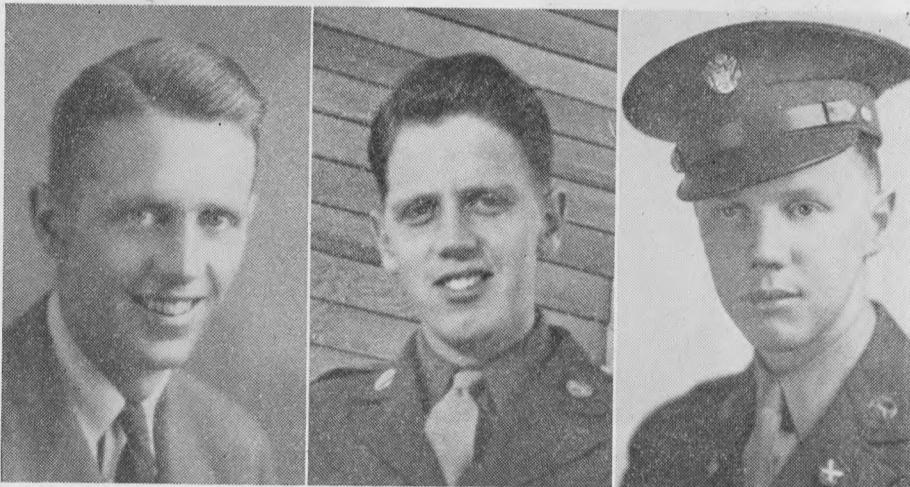
CORPORAL KENNETH JOHNSON—Born in Winnipeg, April 7, 1919. Enlisted in the 28th Canadian Armoured Corps, May 10, 1942. Is now serving at Dundurn, Sask.

SIGNALMAN G. E. JOHNSON—Born in Winnipeg, Sept. 19, 1913. Enlisted in the Royal Canadian Corps of Signals, October, 1940, and embarked for overseas October, 1941.

A.C.1. SKULI JOHNSON—Born in Winnipeg, June 10, 1917. Enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force, February, 1942. Is now stationed in Winnipeg.

A.C.2 ARTHUR JOHNSON—Born at Silver Bay, Man., April 19, 1924. Enlisted January, 1943, in the Royal Canadian Air Force, and is now training at St. Thomas, Ont.

Three Sons of Mr. & Mrs. Hannes Kristjanson Mountain, N. Dak., U. S. A.



Pte. K. B. (Billie)
Kristjanson

Master Sgt. Elvin O.
Kristjanson

Cpl. Hannes Arthur
Kristjanson

THREE SONS OF MR. AND MRS. HANNES KRISTJANSON, MOUNTAIN, N.D., U.S.A.

PTE. K. B. KRISTJANSON—Born at Wynyard, Sask., April 27, 1917. Was inducted into the U.S. Army, July 29, 1942. Trained at Camp Robinson, Ark., U.S.A., is now in Camp Barkley, Texas, with the Medical Corps Headquarters.

MASTER SGT. E. O. KRISTJANSON—Born at Wynyard, Sask., Sept. 14, 1918. Inducted into the U.S. Army, March 19, 1942. Trained in Camp Wallace, Texas, U.S.A. is now at Camp Hulen, Texas, as Chief Administrative Non-Commissioned Officer.

CORPORAL A. KRISTJANSON—Born at Wynyard, Sask., Aug. 11, 1921. Inducted into the U.S. Army, Aug. 27, 1942, with the Cannon Co., 176th Infantry, South Post, Fort Myer, Virginia, U.S.A., from there to Camp Lewis, David Taylor, Model Basin, Wash., D.C., and is now serving at Fredericksburg, Virginia.

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Club News and Personals

Hjalmar A. Bergmann Esq., K.C., has been elected President of the Law Society of Manitoba.

* * *

At the annual meeting of the Medical Society of Winnipeg, Dr. B. J. Brandson was made a life member of the Society.

* * *

Alderman Victor B. Anderson has been elected President of the Typographical Union of Winnipeg.

* * *

H. Steinthorson, of Winnipeg, was elected president of the Western Retail Lumbermen's Association at a recent two-day convention.

* * *

Dr. Charles Hallson, formerly of Winnipeg, chief resident physician of the Jefferson Davis Hospital in Houston, Texas, has been appointed acting superintendent of the hospital.

* * *

G. S. Thorvaldson, K.C., and Arni G. Eggertson, K.C., have entered into partnership with the old and well known law firm of Andrews & Andrews. The name of the new firm will be Andrews, Andrews, Thorvaldson & Eggertson.

* * *

FO Thos. O. Finnbogason is now stationed in Reykjavik, Iceland. Good going, Tommy. We consider you our ambassador of good will, and as such, know we couldn't have chosen better.

* * *

The main feature of the Icelandic Canadian Club meeting held March 14, was a moving picture of the Daniel McIntyre Institute activities. Mr. E. H. Morgan, principal, showed the picture, assisted by Walter Rose and Frank Woodward.

Mrs. Effie Butler was presented with the prize of \$10.00 for her story, "Not Yet So Old", which appeared in the March issue of the Icelandic Canadian.

A bridge and dance was held in the I.O.G.T. hall on March 23. Proceeds were donated to the Jon Sigurdson chapter of the I.O.D.E. for their cigarette fund.

* * *

Alderman Hilda Hesson was the guest speaker at the meeting held April 11th, and gave a very interesting talk on "Tristan da Cunha", the lonely island.

* * *

A Wind-Up dance was held at the Marlborough Hotel on May 8. On behalf of the government of Iceland an Icelandic flag was presented to the club. The presentation was made by the Consul, G. L. Johannson, and received by the president, A. G. Eggertson.

* * *

Mrs. J. A. Bildfell was guest speaker at the meeting held May 16. Her talk on the Eskimo was greatly enjoyed, as were the numerous exhibits she had on display.

Dr. Richard Beck also delivered a brief and inspiring message.

A vocal selection was given by Miss Marian Hart and Omar Blondahl, accompanied by Gunnar Erlendson.

This was the final meeting for the summer. Due to the ever increasing membership it is expected that when activities are resumed in September a larger meeting place will have to be found.

* * *

The annual picnic of the club will be held in June, weather permitting. Notices will appear in the Icelandic weeklies.

* * *

Members are reminded that though there will be no further meetings until September, club activities are by no means deferred during the summer months. A committee has been appointed to arrange a sports programme, and anyone interested in archery, tennis or golf may contact any of the following: Snorri Jonasson, Mrs. Lara B. Sigurdson, Bjorn Petursson, Dr. L. A. Sigurdson.

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BLIZZARD DETOUR

(Continued from page 14)

the stove; the men about the tin basin washed silently; there was a murmur of low voices from the bunk room. Gunn watched the men warily, thinking they might be planning a new trick on him.

He was seated by the coal-oil lamp, preparing his day's report when Forester entered the room.

"I found eighteen illegal—"

"Don't bother me with that now." With a wave of his hand the man seemed to brush the thought away. "Ted ran the chisel through his foot and is in great pain."

"Ted?" Gunn pocketed his book and pencil. "I studied first aid. Maybe the bandage is too tight. May I see 'em?"

"Will you?" Forester's face seemed to brighten. "We know so little about first aid. Larson at Snake Island is good at first aid; I've sent Ben for 'im, but they won't be here 'til the morning."

Gunn found Ted tossing on his bunk. "Your foot hurting much?"

"It's hurting a lot."

Ted's face twitched as Gunn unwound the clumsy, blood soaked bandage, revealing a deep badly swollen wound. The deputy swabbed and disinfected it, then bandaged the foot. Giving Forester a sign to follow him, he went into the kitchen.

"Ted's pulse is rapid," he told the father. "The wound is deep; I fear some of the tendons might be cut. Ted should be taken to a doctor."

Forester's face paled through the tan. "That's what I feared." He stood there thinking for a second, then gave a sharp command. "Sam, harness Ted's dogs to my toboggan. Pete, heat some rocks and get the best blankets ready. Ted's goin' to the hospital."

Gunn toyed with his food at the table; he was worried about Ted. The

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blizzard, a real nor'wester, had struck. The dogs had been worked all day, were tired and might easily give out. In his mind Gunn followed their slow progress through the blizzard, with Ted, suffering, maybe delirious, in the toboggan. He should be in doctor's hands right now and delay might cause blood poisoning or gangrene, he might lose his leg, even his life.

Gunn had a job to attend to, if he didn't get to the camps in time he'd lose that job and Lilia her chance and that was more important than anything else in the world.

But if he drove all night he could take Ted to the hospital and still be in time for work. He'd do it!

He found Forester in the bunk house preparing Ted for the trip.

"The dogs are tired and the blizzard is bad," he told the older man. "I'll take Ted in the snowmobile to the Gimli hospital."

Forester stared at the young man in surprise. "I have no right to ask you to do that," he said, "and certainly no reason to expect it. That would take a weight off my mind."

With his arm about Gunn's shoulder Ted hobbled out to the waiting snowmobile. "It was me poured water over the snowmobile," he said weakly. "I'm sorry now."

"Forget it." Gunn placed Ted among blankets. He saw Forester's face, haggard in the lantern light.

"I can't tell you—" The man hesitated, then added in a husky whisper, "God be with you," as he closed the door, shutting out the bitter wind.

With a roar that drowned the screaming wind the snowmobile shot away, heading for Gimli to the southwest. There was no landmark to go by, nothing but a desert of ice and snow. The headlights at best were poor, now they were almost useless. The newly fallen snow, small hard particles, was lifted as by a giant scoop and hurled against the windshield. The prevailing north wind had a sweep of two hun-

dred miles without an obstacle or hindrance and had formed snowbanks like windrows of newly cut hay, leaving the ice bare and slippery between. Gunn's problem was to keep between these rows.

There was no speedometer on the snowmobile; he had to drive by compass and guesswork, ever on the watch for the treacherous leads formed by currents beneath the ice. Those patches of open water were sometimes small, sometimes big enough to swallow the snowmobile. The wind howled about the canvas-covered frame, shaking it with giant hands, threatening to tear it apart. Suddenly there was a loud report, followed by three others.

"Gas line must be freezing," Gunn muttered, as he opened the throttle wide. He had had trouble with the gas line before, moisture in it freezing and partially cutting off the flow, and had found that feeding more gas usually cleared it. But not this time. With a cough and a snort the engine died down and the snowmobile slid to a stop.

Taking his flash, Gunn jumped out, closing the door behind him. As he lifted the hood it was almost torn out of his hands by the gale. He examined the carburetor, the gas line and the spark plugs; he found them in perfect order.

When he opened the door the light fell on Ted's pale face; he awakened with a start and stared about in confusion.

"What's the matter?" he asked anxiously.

"Nothing," Gunn lied soothingly. "There must be a loose connection. I'll take a look. Can you hold the flash?"

Gunn was prying up the floor boards when Ted said, "Look at the gas," directing the flash on the meter. "She's empty."

"Can't be." Fascinated, Gunn stared at the gasoline meter whose needle pointed to zero. "I filled her just before supper."

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Gunn took the stick he kept for just such an emergency, unscrewed the tank cap and inserted it. It came out dry. The gasoline tank was empty!

He was out on the lake, in a raging blizzard, with a very sick man on his hands and out of gas. Not a very pleasant situation, Gunn thought.

"There must be a leak, somewhere." Again taking the flash and a pair of pliers he lay down on his back in front of the snowmobile—which was very low—and wriggled under it. He emerged from beneath it in a few minutes, his jaw set, his eyes bright.

"Find the leak?" Ted asked hopefully.

"Yeah, I found the leak. Gunn's voice was strange and hard. He took the small tin of gas from the back of the seat and emptied its contents into the tank, started the engine, turned and went back the way he'd come.

He found the cabin in darkness. To get immediate light he grabbed off the lid on the heater in the bunk room, which was stoked for the night with wood.

"Hey! Wake up!" he yelled.

As if thrown out by a bomb, Forester leaped to the floor.

"Why're you back?" With fear ridden eyes he stared at the young deputy.

"Ted's no worse," Gunn said hastily to relieve the father's anxiety. "But somebody turned the cock on the gas-line beneath the snowmobile, so all the gas leaked out."

"Impossible!" Forester was relieved but unconvinced. "The men knew you were taking Ted out, no one would turn it. The shaking of the snowmobile must have loosened it. You've got plenty of gas here. Can't you fill'er up and go again?"

"It was turned deliberately." Gunn spat out the words in his rage. "I couldn't close it with my hands; had to use the pliers. I thought I was doing you and your smart gang a favor, but someone played a dirty trick on me. I said I'd take Ted to the hospital, and I stick to my word. Help me siphon gas from the drum."

The older man's smile began with his eyes, then swept over his face. He looked at the young deputy with shrewd eyes.

"That's fine, Gunn," he said. "Let's hurry.

"No one can monkey with my snowmobile," Gunn said grimly when he was ready to leave, "an' get away with it. When I get back, I want to know who did it, and I'll knock the living daylights out of 'im."

The hours seemed like days as Gunn drove. His fingers were stiff with cold, his toes numbed. Ted slept rest-

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lessly beside him, moaning and mumbling.

At last he thought it time to turn west to strike the village of Gimli. Luck was with him, a single light gave him the location of the village and he found a low place in the pile of pressure ice which had formed along the lake shore.

At the hospital a young interne admitted them and Ted was taken at once to the operating room.

After what seemed hours of impatient waiting, Ted was wheeled out followed by Doctor Gillman. "How is he?" Gunn asked.

"He'll be all right," Dr. Gillman said. "Two of the tendons were severed. I found and connected them and there's only a slight infection. The young man'll be as good as new, but it was fortunate he got here so early; connecting tendons can be a pretty hard job if it's delayed too long."

Ted would be all right. Relieved, Gunn strode out into the biting cold

and with the throttle wide open sent the snowmobile tearing along the ice. There was a faint flush of dawn to the east when he reached the camp. The cabin door flew open and Forester stepped out. Gunn repeated what the doctor had said about Ted.

Entering the kitchen he found Pete hovering about the stove. "I got breakfast ready for yuh," the little man said. "I baked a pie for yuh, too."

"That's swell of you, Pete." Gunn shed his parka. "I'll grab a bite, then get going."

"Get goin'. What you mean?" Ben was standing in the bunk room doorway.

"I've got to hurry to Snake Island." Gunn grinned up at the faces about him. "I've got a job to attend to, you know."

"Yuh mean you're goin' out again?" Forester gave the deputy a hard look. "Yuh haven't slept for twenty-four hours."

"Shucks. I'll be all right."

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"Yeah, a man like yuh'd be all right, at any time, anywhere." Forester sat down at the table beside him. "I'd like to repay yuh for takin' Ted out."

"Forget it." Gunn felt a little embarrassed. "If a fellow needs help and one can help him, one just does it. That's all."

Forester's eyes narrowed and his lips quirked into a smile. "Ben," he said as he stood up, "you drive Gunn to Snake Island, so he can snatch a little sleep, then bring him back here tonight. Now get the snowmobile ready while he's eatin'."

Outside, Gunn found the snowmobile refuelled with Ben waiting beside it.

"Ted's my buddy," the young fisherman blurted. "I blamed you for him gettin' hurt, so I opened the gas-cock, while yuh was having supper. I was sent for Larson, so didn't know yuh was takin' Ted out. Now I feel like a heel." The big fellow thrust out his

tanned face. "Sock me one," he invited.

"Skip it," Gunn said gruffly as he climbed into the seat and as the other took the seat beside him. "But I'll take you up on that if you don't get me to the fishing grounds in time."

"Okay." Ben turned and grinned. "But yuh won't hafta. I'll get yuh there in time." He slipped the gears and they sped away.

As Gunn sat there he was filled with well-being. He felt certain he could trust Ben and was glad the fishermen now accepted him. It was good to know that on this, his first job, he had succeeded, when only the day before he had been afraid of failing. The purring of the engine was soothing and as he was dropping off to sleep, he seemed to hear his sister singing.

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The Book Page

Although the Icelandic Canadian will itself, as a rule, review books by Icelanders in North America it is glad, at this time, to reprint a review, by one who may be termed a total stranger, of that very carefully selected volume of Icelandic poetry and prose edited by Dr. Richard Beck of the University of North Dakota. The review is by John Gordon of the editorial staff of The Winnipeg Tribune.

ICELANDIC POEMS AND STORIES

By JOHN GORDON

One of the most flourishing and interesting of the national cultures brought by immigrants to the New World has been that of the Icelanders.

For hundreds of years the people of this isolated Isle of the North Atlantic have cherished their sonorous, beautifully rhythmic poetry. The unique characteristic of their literature, however, is that it is found not only in the universities and in city homes but rises just as fluently from farms in the rocky hills and from huts in the moorlands.

Born in the saga and perpetuated in the *rimur*, Icelandic literature has risen in the past century to a new golden age, flourishing as it has not flourished since the 13th Century.

A volume containing English translations of Icelandic poetry and prose of the last hundred years is therefore a timely one. Such a volume has been edited by Dr. Richard Beck, professor of Scandinavian literature at the University of North Dakota and a one-time resident of Winnipeg.

Dr. Beck, also president of the Icelandic Patriotic Society of America, is a frequent visitor here. He is one of several persons represented in this collection—either as author or translator—well known in Winnipeg.

The editor restricted himself, with one exception, to authors who now live or who lived most of their lives in Iceland. The exception is Stephan G. Stephansson, who lived several years in the United States, then in Alberta from 1889 until his death in 1927.

Both local Icelandic newspapers may bask a bit in the glory of representation.

Einar Hjörleifsson Kvaran, first editor of *Lögberg*, served here from 1885 until 1895. An early member of the school of realism in Icelandic writing, his two prose works which appear are among the highlights in the collection. Gestur Pálsson, who was here as editor of *Heimskringla* in 1890 and 1891, is represented with the excellent, *Sigurdur the Fisherman*, also prose.

Translators include Dr. Beck himself; Professor Skuli Johnson, professor of classics at the University of Manitoba; Professor Watson Kirkconnell, formerly of United college and now at MacMaster University; and Jakobina Johnson, now resident in Seattle, who was born and educated in Winnipeg. Mrs. Johnson is a sister-in-law of E. P. Johnson, present editor of *Lögberg*.

In all there are 28 authors represented in the book with almost 50 poems and 16 stories. These cover the years from Bjarni Thorarensen, pioneer Icelandic poet, to the modern Halldór Kiljan Laxness.

Among those whose work stands out, to this reviewer's taste, are Jónas Hallgrímsson, *A Greeting*; Steingrímur Thorsteinsson, *Swansong on the Moorlands*; Matthías Jochumsson, *Ecstasy*; Einar Benediktsson, *Rain*; Davið Stefánsson, *Sail in the Fall*; and Laxness, *Lily*.

The originals are probably more of a thrill to the ear than the translations. This is not a criticism of the translators. All seem to have done an excellent job but they have translated into a comparatively unwieldy language work which, in the original, depends to an unusual degree on the rhythm and the rhyming of the native words.

Translations of the prose works did

not present quite the same difficulty. The stories in the collection, however, whether this is due to selection or to the scope covered by the writers themselves, have a certain sameness. For an excellent and tender story, though I would recommend **The Orphan** by Kvaran.

All in all the Icelanders come off very well in this book which should be an important one to every Canadian who wishes to understand his friend and neighbor. The Icelanders fill an important place in our life. Probably one-fifth of the Icelanders in the world—including the homeland—live within 200 miles of Winnipeg. It is a privilege to be able to share with them the work of their great writers.



THE WEDDING NIGHT

By UNNUR BENEDIKTSDÓTTIR
(writing under the pen-name Hulda),
translated by Mekkin Sveinson Perkins
and published in Beck's Icelandic
Poems and Stories.

The church bells were ringing.

Their sound, as bright and cheerful as could be produced by an old set of bells, was borne into the houses. Everyone smiled. Some went to the windows or the door and looked out. The prettiest girl in the town was to be married that night. The young girls were all donning their best; they were going to the wedding. Servants kept rushing back and forth through the houses, ever in search of some needed article. At last, attired in all their finery, the girls came down to the parlor to mothers and grandmothers and, happy carefree, left for the church. The older women shook their heads after the girls had departed. Yes, indeed, they knew life. Marriage could be a failure even though the bride were as lovely as a day in spring and the groom a fine fellow.

It was a bright July evening, the sky all blue and gold. As the village clock struck six, the bridal procession filed through the streets.

On the slope to the west of the village lay the cemetery, affording a fine view over the buildings and the fjord beyond. By a grave on which the grass was beginning to sprout a young man sat and watched the procession until it disappeared within the church, far in the south end of town. Long after the church doors had closed behind it, he stood there gazing at them.

Then turning round, he looked down at the grave and sighed softly.

He had had but one intimate friend, and that friend now rested there under the sod. He had loved but one woman, and she now knelt before the altar at another's side.

Though the sun warmed his neck and cheek, he was unaware of it. Though the fragrance of the birches from the glen was wafted to him by a soft breeze, he felt it not. He was communing with his friend: "To you alone I could have told it. You alone knew all."

He bent his head down upon the grass. It cooled his fevered brow, though the soil was parched by the sun. Perhaps it was merely imagination, but his thoughts seemed the calmer for it. He lay still, watching the procession of visions from bygone days.

In every one of them she appeared.

First as a light-footed little girl, in a short, red dress and a straw hat that would never stay on her head but fell down on her back, where, held by an elastic, it bobbed up and down on her loosely flowing tresses. It was delightful to see her run and to hear her laugh.

Then, a little older, she flashed by on a sled, her cheeks glowing in the cold.

Next he saw her walking serenely, clad in her confirmation dress, the loveliest among her companions. She had waited at the gate that day and looked in his direction as he passed by with his friend. He hardly dared extend congratulations; she seemed so grown-up, almost like a bride.

Then one night at a dance she had flown with him straight into the heaven of bliss. With her alone was happiness;

all else was sadness. Later he learned the reason for her high spirits and her gaiety: She had just learned that her dearest hopes were to come true. Thinking back on it, he remembered that she had been equally gay with everyone. But at first he had thought her smiles were meant for him alone.

Now a shadow darkened his reverie.

He was following his friend to the last resting place and she disappeared for the moment. On her return, she no longer was alone, A handsome young man walked at her side.

Last of all came the vision in the bridal veil. He looked searchingly into her eyes. "Don't you remember? Don't you remember? No one has loved you more than I." Her hair was spread out beneath the bridal veil; her lips were red; her arms lovlier than ever. She gave him a friendly smile and passed on. He could see the broad shoulders of the bridegroom at her side.

His sorrow crept out into every nerve. As he faced a future without her, the cold and the darkness gripped him like an eclipse at midday.

Once again the church bells pealed out.

He rose to his feet and saw her come out of the church, white as a cloud in the summer sky, her husband like a shadow at her side. Slowly they approached. Now they were passing the cemetery. He could see the flowers in her bridal veil and her profile standing out above the grating in the gate. No one in the bridal party saw him. He was glad of that. No one must know where he was. No one must divine his thoughts. The procession was very long. Now and again the bride would disappear to the rear among the guests, but she always came back, looking white and pure as a dove. Everything seemed so strangely dark in contrast. Then she crossed the threshold of the man she loved, and finally disappeared, not to return.

In his mind's eye he could see a pic-

ture of her the next morning coming outdoors, lovely in her dignity as a wife, while he, poor unfortunate beggar, would stand afar off.

Once again the future opened out before him, a vast pitch-dark expanse, without sun or stars. The darkness weighed like a load upon his shoulders. He hid his face in the grave and wept.

The evening was far spent. Worn with violent weeping, he shivered in the chilly air. He leaned against the grave. The stones cast their black shadows behind them, while out beyond the shore stretched the dark blue sea. The dew was beginning to fall, softly, very softly. Up on the hill a plover still sang; it tripped along, halted, and then sang again so beautifully, its breast gleaming in the last rays of the setting sun. A gentle breeze ran along the ground, stirring every flower and every blade of grass, as though seeking to find out whether they had actually dropped off to sleep. Then it passed on, leaving a dead calm behind.

The eastern sky was bright, giving promise of a fine day. The blue haze that veiled everything in the east would later clear up and the first rays of light appear. Then would come the dawn, again lighting up the clouds with brilliant hues, and at last the sun itself would rise.

The young man in the cemetery stood up. He looked to the west, where the sun had set; then he ran his eyes to the north, out to sea; and finally brought them to rest on the blue in the eastern sky. In that soft, hark hue his spirit found peace. He was exhausted by the combat with stark reality which had held him so fast that he could not hear the voice of his heart.

Little did he realize that his thoughts were like the blue in the summer sky just before daybreak, which changes first to the brilliant hues of dawn and then gives way to a clear, bright day.

IN LIGHTER VEIN

His First Love

"Doctor, I am scared to death. This is my first operation."

"Sure, I know just how you feel. You're my first patient."

* * *

Lost and Found

Found: Lady's purse left in my car while parked. Contains \$5.00 in change, etc. Owner can have same by describing property and paying for this ad. If owner can explain satisfactorily to my wife how purse got into car, will pay for ad. myself.

* * *

Horse sense is the kind a jackass hasn't got.

* * *

Magistrate (to prisoner charged with drunkenness): "You must pay a fine of five dollars."

Prisoner: "Sure then, I've but two dollars in the world."

Magistrate: "Then you must go to prison. If you hadn't got drunk with your money you'd have had enough to pay the fine."

* * *

"Janitor, you could cool our apartment nicely if you would run ice water through the radiators."

"Can't be done, madam."

"What did you have in them last winter?"

A diplomat is a man who can make his wife believe she would look fat in a fur coat.—Whit's Wit.

* * *

The colonel of a battalion billeted in the country was invited to a neighboring farm for lunch.

He astounded the farmer by eating two small roasted fowls. Later, while walking in the farmyard, he noticed a cock strutting about, and remarked, "By gad! That's a proud bird."

"So he should be," answered the farmer; "he has two sons in the army now."

CRUMBS

A baby born 14 hours after a raid on Leningrad had a bomb splinter in its hip. Doctors removed the splinter.

* * *

A Norwegian worker was given a two-year prison sentence for not giving up his seat in an Oslo tram car to a German officer. Fourteen witnesses who said the German behaved brutally were each jailed for a month.

* * *

Captured in the Eighth Army advance to Tripoli, a German officer revealed to his captors that he had been brought up in America, and when jestingly told he was fighting on the wrong side, he replied, "You're telling me."

Observe

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